

Appl. No. 09/109,343
Amdt. dated 08/10/2004
Reply to Office Action of June 14, 2004

REMARKS

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action mailed June 14, 2004. In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 5, 7-11, 14, 16, 19, 21, 23, 24, and 26-28 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 and indicated allowable subject matter in claims 25, 29, and 30-32. Reconsideration in light of the amendments and remarks made herein is respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

2. The Examiner rejects claims 1-3, 5, 7-11, 14, 16, 19, 21, 23, 24, and 26-28 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Le Goff et al. (US 6,438,127).

Re claim 1, applicant has amended independent apparatus claim 1 to include the limitations of dependent claims 3 and 7 and to correspond generally to method claim 32 which the Examiner indicated contained allowable subject matter. Claims 3 and 7 have been cancelled.

Re claim 8, claims 8-11 and 14 have been cancelled.

Re claim 16, applicant has amended method claim 16 to include the limitations of dependent claim 19 and to correspond generally to method claim 32 which the Examiner indicated contained allowable subject matter. New dependent claims 38-42 have been added.

Re claim 24, this claim depends from claim 21 which has been amended to include the limitations of dependent claim 32 which the Examiner indicated contained allowable subject matter as discussed below.

Re claim 26, applicant has claim 26 to include the limitations of dependent claim 32 which the Examiner indicated contained allowable subject matter as discussed below.

Re claim 2, applicants rely on the patentability of the claim from which this claim depends to traverse the rejection without prejudice to any further basis for patentability of this claim based on the additional limitations recited.

Re claims 3, 9, and 10, these claims have been cancelled.

Re claim 5, applicants rely on the patentability of the claim from which this claim depends to traverse the rejection without prejudice to any further basis for patentability of this claim based on the additional limitations recited.

Re claim 7, this claim has been cancelled.

Re claims 27, and 28, applicants rely on the patentability of the claims from which these claims depend to traverse the rejection without prejudice to any further basis for patentability of these claims based on the additional limitations recited.

Re claims 11, 14, and 19, these claims have been cancelled.

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Re claim 23, applicants rely on the patentability of the claim from which this claim depends to traverse the rejection without prejudice to any further basis for patentability of this claim based on the additional limitations recited.

Re claim 24, applicants rely on the patentability of the claim from which this claim depends to traverse the rejection without prejudice to any further basis for patentability of this claim based on the additional limitations recited.

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter. The Examiner objects to claims 25, 29, and 30-32 as being dependent on a rejected base claim, but indicates that the claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicant has amended independent claim 21 to include all of the limitations of dependent claim 25 and any intervening dependent claims and cancelled claim 25. Applicant respectfully requests that independent claim 21 and all claims that depend therefrom be allowed.

Applicant has amended independent claim 26 to include all of the limitations of dependent claim 32 and any intervening dependent claims and cancelled claim 32. Dependent claim 29 has been amended for consistency with claim 26 as amended. Applicant respectfully requests that independent claim 26 and all claims that depend therefrom be allowed.

Applicant has added new independent claim 33 which corresponds to independent claim 26 all of the limitations of dependent claim 29 and any intervening dependent claims. Applicant respectfully requests that independent claim 33 and all claims that depend therefrom be allowed.

Conclusion

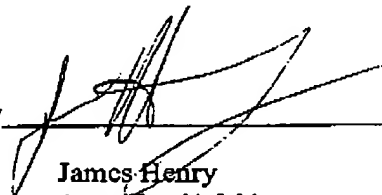
Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR & ZAFMAN LLP

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By



James Henry
Reg. No. 41,064
Tel.: (714) 557-3800 (Pacific Coast)